

Ashwoods Records & Books – Staff Memories (1974–1976)

This note brings together what is known and remembered about staff at Ashwoods Records & Books in the mid-1970s (around 1974–76). While few digitised sources list individual employees, oral histories and recollections, combined with archival leads, help to sketch the atmosphere and some of the people who worked there. **Note:** One of the staff members, **Richard Wakefield**, is the compiler of these memories. His first-hand recollections add unique authenticity to this record.

Confirmed and Recalled Staff:

- **Neville Wright** ("Nev"): Remembered as one of the managers/owners during this era. Customers and staff recall him as a storyteller with a strong presence in the shop.
- **Reg Hoskins** ("Reg"): Partnered with Neville; both were said to be present daily. Recollections describe them as hands-on and supportive of staff.
- **Keith Withers, Bernie Parsons, Brian Kindness**: Names remembered by former staff/customers as part of the Ashwoods team during the mid-70s, though no digitised records have yet been found confirming them.
- **Richard Wakefield**: Staff member 1974–76, and contributor of these recollections. His presence at Ashwoods during this period provides valuable first-hand insight.
- **Pearl Sutton**: Remembered as a lady working at Ashwoods in this period (possibly on the books side). No archival mentions yet located, but she remains part of the living memory of the store.

Context:

Ashwoods in the mid-1970s was still on Pitt Street, with a reputation as a labyrinth of second-hand books and records. Staff worked among towering piles of vinyl, 78s, and paperbacks. Customers recall a welcoming, slightly chaotic atmosphere, where every visit felt like a treasure hunt. Staff from this era were central to that spirit, remembered fondly even when not named in official histories.

Sources & Leads:

- Oral history from Peter Wykes Burgis (worked 1966–73).
- Vanessa Berry's recollections of Sydney record shops.
- Forum discussions (Stereonet, Steve Hoffman) where former staff and customers recall "Reg" and "Nev".
- City of Sydney archives and Trove (newspaper ads, 1970s).

Future research could involve targeted Trove searches for staff names in classifieds or articles, plus checking electoral rolls and local directories for Pitt Street businesses in 1974–76.